

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	259549
Inspection date	23/03/2011
Inspector	Lindsey Cullum
Type of setting	Childminder

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2001. She lives with her three children aged thirteen, nine and one year in North Walsham, Norfolk. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. The family has a dog, two cats, pet rats, rabbits and guinea pigs.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. There are currently four children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder holds an appropriate childcare qualification. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a member of the Norfolk Network. The childminder provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder offers exceptional care for children within the Early Years Foundation Stage. She is skilled in meeting children's individual needs and adapts activities, sensitively to ensure all children experience exciting, stimulating and challenging play experiences. The children all participate in activities promoting an inclusive environment where children are warmly welcomed and highly valued as individuals. Excellent partnerships are developed with parents and effective systems are in place to link with other providers in order to consistently support children's learning. The childminder has an excellent understanding of her strengths and constantly considers ways in which she may further improve the service she provides. She continuously monitors her provision to make sure it is responsive to the needs of the children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- strengthen the partnerships with early years practitioners where children attend more than one setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are expertly safeguarded and their welfare, care and safety promoted exceptionally well. The childminder is well-qualified and experienced and strives extremely hard to consistently provide outstanding care. She is fully aware of her duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children and has detailed written procedures to clearly guide her in the event of a concern about a child in her care. Children's safety and well-being are given high priority. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out on all areas of the home, the resources and equipment to ensure children's safety and well-being at all times. Furthermore, thorough risk assessments are undertaken before outings which enable the children to take part in an exciting range of activities including trips to the park or library and go on nature walks or visit the garden centre, with the risks being clearly identified and effectively minimised. Equipment is of high quality and has been developed extremely well to allow children lots of choice and promote their independence. The childminder is exceptionally well organised. Considerable care has been taken to develop the home into a reassuring, cosy, child-centred environment where children thrive. Thoughtfully presented displays of children's creative work and photographs of the children enjoying an excellent range of activities ensure children experience a strong sense of belonging.

The childminder is highly committed to continuous improvement and has implemented systems to regularly review her practice that involve parents and children. She has a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, is extremely successful in supporting children's development and gives high priority to meeting each child's needs. The excellent care provided is a result of the childminder's dedication to her role and her passion for providing the best she can for each and every child in her care. She frequently attends training and links with other childminders to enhance her knowledge and skills and share good practice. The childminder actively promotes equality and diversity and ensures all children are involved, given their abilities, ages and starting points and learn how to respect and celebrate one another's differences.

The childminder builds close and successfully partnerships with parents. Comprehensive information about the childminder's practice informs parents prior to the commencement of care and assists in the successful settling of children. Parents are fully informed about their child's welfare and kept up-to-date through regular conversations, daily diaries, access to activity plans and sharing and contributing to the learning and development records. As a result, children receive continuity in care and a stimulating balance of activities and experiences. Parents who use the childminder's provision are delighted with the service and have provided exceptionally positive feedback about the provision and the outcomes for their children. The childminder has established effective links with other settings the children attend in order to further promote consistency in the children's care and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children flourish in the rich, stimulating and happy environment. They take part in an extensive range of activities, both self-selected and adult-led, to maximise their progress in all areas of learning and development. Thorough initial and ongoing assessment identifies what children can do, what they like to do and what they need to do to progress. This information enables the childminder to support children's learning through planned activities which provide realistic challenges and allow children to learn at their own pace. The home is comfortable and welcoming, with only the ground floor being used for childminding which is accessible via a ramp to the back door. The walls are decorated with photographs of the children playing and displays the children have created around different themes, for example the life cycle of frogs. Children demonstrate pride in their achievement showing off their pictures or referring to the display when talking about the tadpoles in the childminder's pond. The childminder provides an extensive choice of resources that are presented very well for children to independently access.

Children are enthusiastic and highly motivated to learn. They talk freely knowing the childminder will listen to them and value what they say. They are confident and animated as they recall activities that they have enjoyed together, share their ideas and talk easily about their home lives with the childminder. Children listen intently to stories and seek puppets or props so they can take an active part in the storytelling. Throughout their play, the childminder is extending their vocabulary and she introduces new words. The childminder is highly adept at following children's lead and spontaneously developing learning opportunities as they arise. For example, to accurately assess children's ability with numbers they play with numbered stacking boxes which they confidently build in sequence. Children count freely and confidently experiment. For example, whilst playing with the train track they count the number of carriages the battery operated train will pull. The childminder skilfully asks questions which encourage children to think and predict, such as, 'how many do you think the train will pull?' and 'how many more carriages do you need to make 10?' Children are gaining an excellent understanding of simple mathematical concepts and becoming critical thinkers. Children have active imaginations and they frequently engage in role play, dressing up in the pirates costume as they play with the pirate ship. The childminder provides an extensive range of resources which positively reflect diversity and plans incorporate a variety of festivals celebrated throughout the year, raising children's awareness of the wider world. Children relish opportunities to be creative and access a wealth of resources and materials. They frequently paint, draw, chalk, stick and construct with modelling materials. Excellent use is made of the garden for children to explore, experiment and learn about the natural world. Children are exceedingly interested in the frogs spawn in the garden pond and check the development of this daily. They confidently discuss how this will transform in to tadpoles and talk about what frogs eat. Children are learning to care for animals and often handle guinea pigs or help to feed the fish. The childminder provides natural materials for children to explore such as crafted wooden bricks, sand, water and soil. Children eagerly experiment with the drain pipe system set up on the fence and their enthusiasm leads to further exploration

and learning.

Children are taught consistent and thorough hygiene routines. They wash and dry their hands using individual towels that are labelled for them in order to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Even the bathroom is child-centred as the toilet roll holder resembles a frog, their pegs are happy clown figures and pictures remind children of good hygiene practices. Meals are provided in agreement with parents, following the childminder's healthy eating policy and meet children's dietary needs. Drinking water is freely accessible and children regularly help themselves ensuring they remain well-hydrated. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to play outdoors. They frequently take activity boxes, such as, 'windy day' resources to the park where they are also able to enjoy more physically challenging equipment. Children frequently walk to and from school or go on nature walks where they collect materials such as leaves for creative activities. The childminder gives high priority to children's awareness of safety issues whilst ensuring they are able to take realistic and manageable risks for themselves with set limits. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They learn to share resources, take turns, play cooperatively and show respect and care for each other. The childminder is an excellent role model and provides high levels of support and guidance. She fully recognises effort as well as achievement, and consequently, children develop positive attitudes to themselves as learners, gaining many new skills which will help them in later life.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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